
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	2123 Leroy Place, NW		Agenda
Landmark/District:	Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District	X	Consent Calendar
		X	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	December 15, 2011	X	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	12-033		New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott		Demolition
			Subdivision

Architect Frederick Taylor, representing owner Peter Robinson, seeks conceptual review for construction of a roof deck and enclosed roof access stair on a house in Sheridan Kalorama. The deck would have very limited visibility from Leroy Place, and visibility from California Street through an open parking lot.

Property History and Description

2123 Leroy is one in a series of four rowhouses constructed in 1911 by builder Howard Etchison. The row was designed by architect Merrill Vaughn, who practiced architecture in the District from 1906 until the 1940s; the majority of his career was spent as an architect for the U.S. Postal Service. Stylistically, the houses an eclectic interpretation of the Georgian Revival, with heavy overhanging cornices supported by large brackets, multi-light windows, prominent door surrounds, and robust stone and brick detailing.

Proposal

The roof deck would be constructed on the upper-most roof, approximately 14 feet back from the front façade and about two feet from the east side wall. The enclosed stair would be roughly centered on the building, pulled eight feet from the east side wall, adjacent to an existing elevator shaft. The enclosure would only be large enough to house the stair, with a sloped roof and clad in multi-light fixed windows.

Evaluation

Roof decks are a not uncommon feature in the rowhouse portion of Sheridan-Kalorama, where outdoor garden space is scarce. While there several visible and obtrusive decks that predate the creation of the historic district, these have not set a precedent for how the Board has reviewed new proposals. As in other rowhouse contexts, the Board has applied its standard that new roof decks should not interrupt the roof line and should be largely invisible from street views as seen from the front of the property.

In order to evaluate the applicants' proposal, the HPO, together with representatives of the Sheridan-Kalorama Historical Association and ANC 2-D, met with the owner and the project architect to view a mock up of the proposed stair and desk on November 28th.

As initially designed and mocked-up, the deck would have had some visibility from the south, due to gap in the streetwall created by the adjacent property's one-story side wing, and would have required a zoning variance. However, with minor adjustments to the location and setback of the deck railing and stair enclosure, and eliminating the elevator extension up to the roof, the visibility was significantly reduced to where it would not be intrusive or prominent and where it would no longer require zoning relief. While the revised proposal will have some visibility from California Street through an apartment building parking lot, it will also not be obtrusive or affect important views within the historic district.

The staff recommends that the Review Board approve the concept as consistent with the character of the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District.